

Research Article

Domesticising *Macbeth* in Malayalam Cinema: Dileesh Pothan's *Joji*

Ms. Geetanjali Gitay

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English, K.R.T. Arts, B.H. Commerce and A.M. Science (KTHM) College, Nasik, Maharashtra - 422002, India;
geetanjalogitay@gmail.com

Dr. Sharad K. Binnor

Professor and Head, Department of English, K.R.T. Arts, B.H. Commerce and A.M. Science (KTHM) College, Nasik, Maharashtra - 422002, India;
sharadbinnor@gmail.com

Accepted version published on 5 December 2025

DOI <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17976030>

Abstract: Shakespeare, a long-standing enigma hailing from the English dramatic tradition, continues to be reinterpreted by artists across the globe in multiple media even after four centuries. Though a colonial import, Shakespeare's literary, performative, and cinematic adaptations have made their presence felt in India for over two and a half centuries. The present paper explores '*Joji*', a Malayalam film directed by Dileesh Pothan, as an indigenous adaptation of *Macbeth*. This film transposes the dramatic hypotext from the 11th-century Scottish royal court to a 21st-century Christian rubber-plantation-owning household in pandemic-stricken Kerala, recontextualising the royal politics within the intimate domestic power dynamics. This paper examines the intertextual engagement of this film with the source play through the lens of film adaptation theory. The paper argues that this cross-cultural cinematic adaptation deconstructs Shakespeare as an imperial icon and reconfigures him instead as a literary figure of enduring cultural significance and relevance in the postcolonial Indian context.

Keywords: cross-cultural film adaptation; intertextuality; power dynamics

Introduction

Shakespeare arrived in India as entertainment for the traders of the East India Company in the early seventeenth century (Trivedi and Bartholomeusz 13). Later, *The Calcutta Theatre* (1775-1808), where Shakespeare was performed, was established with the help of noted British performer David Garrick. 'The Education Act' of 1835 consolidated the Bard's position in institutional education in India. Alongside its academic presence, Shakespeare was also freely appropriated by the Parsi theatre in India. This theatrical enterprise was pioneered by a theatre group, "Elphinstone Dramatic Society", formed by amateur student performers at Elphinstone College in Mumbai, and later by the first commercial dramatic company, "Parsi Natak Mandali", formed in 1853, which later flourished into several commercial playgroups that performed these plays. This commercial enterprise performed Indianised versions of Shakespeare's plays in English, Gujarati, Urdu, and Hindustani. These plays were filmed and later released in independent cinemas. The Indian cinema thus shares the link with the Bard since its nascent phase. Indigenous adaptations of Shakespeare's works have since maintained a consistent presence in Indian cinema. The present paper aims to explore *"Joji"* (2021), a Malayalam film directed by Dileesh Pothan, which was released exclusively on the OTT platform *Amazon Prime*, as an indigenous adaptation of *"Macbeth"* (1606).b

Macbeth (1606), a tragedy of 'thrifless ambition' (Shakespeare 2.4.28), is a tale of war, witchcraft, and bloodshed set in 11th-century Scotland. Shakespeare dramatised events from Ralph Holinshed's *Chronicles* for this shortest and at the same time, the bloodiest of his tragedies. *Macbeth* has inspired several cinematic adaptations. Notable film adaptations of *Macbeth* include Akira Kurosawa's *'Throne of Blood'* (1957) and Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1971). Australian filmmaker Geoffrey Wright adapted *Macbeth* in 2006, and British filmmaker Rupert Goold in 2010. Bhardwaj brought *Macbeth* to Bollywood in 2004 as the first installment of his Shakespeare trilogy.

Notable adaptations of Shakespeare's plays in Malayalam cinema include *Kaliyattam* (1997), an adaptation of *Othello* directed by Jayaraj, *Kannaki* (2001), a re-imagining of *Antony and Cleopatra*, also by Jayaraj, *Karmayogi* (2012), based on *Hamlet*, directed by V. K. Prakash and *Veeram* (2016), Jayaraj's retelling of *Macbeth* set in medieval Kerala. *Joji* (2021), directed by Dileesh Pothan and starring the celebrated actor Fahadh Faasil in the titular role, carries forward this cinematic lineage of adapting the Bard into regional Indian contexts. The director of the film, Dileesh Pothan, is a gifted filmmaker, actor, and producer active in Malayalam cinema. He began his journey in films as an assistant and associate director, before making his directorial debut with *Maheshinte Prathikaaram* (2016), which starred Fahadh Faasil in the lead role and won the National Award for 'Best Feature Film' in Malayalam. It also marked the beginning of a creative partnership between him and Fahadh Faasil. Their collaboration continued with *Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* (2017), and *Joji* (2021) is their third creative outing together. The film is co-produced by Pothan's *"Working Class Hero"* and Faasil's production company, *"Fahadh Faasil & Friends"*. *Joji* (2021) was released exclusively on the international OTT platform *Amazon Prime*. Although research articles

explore multiple Indian cinematic adaptations of Shakespeare, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the present film adaptation. The paper seeks to fill this gap by analysing the film through the lens of film adaptation theory and examining the source text's transformation across theme, plot, setting, and characters.

Theoretical Framework

Gerard Genette in *Palimpsests: Literature in Second Degree* argues that the object of poetics is not the (literary) text but its *“textual transcendence”* (ix), its textual links with other texts. He introduces the concept of *“transtextuality”* and defines its five types, of which *intertextuality* and *hypertextuality* are relevant to the present study. Julia Kristeva first put forward the concept of intertextuality, and she defines it as *“any text is the absorption and transformation of another”* (*Word, Dialogue and Novel*, in *Desire in Language*, 1980, p. 66).

Gennett defines intertextuality as *“a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts”* (*Palimpsests* 1). The concept of *hypertextuality* is defined by Gennett as *“any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary”* (*Palimpsests* 5). Understood in this sense, while a literary work becomes the *hypotext* by virtue of predating its film adaptation, the latter becomes the *hypertext*. The former originates from the latter through a process which Genette refers to as *“transformation.”* In the hands of a filmmaker, all the existing film adaptations and their literary original together form a collective *hypotext*.

Carrying forward the same argument, Linda Hutcheon's *Theory of Adaptation* (2006) defines adaptation as:

- An acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works
- A creative *and* an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging
- An extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work. (8)

Hutcheon puts a threefold criterion to discuss indigenous adaptation, and states that an indigenous adaptation works by (1) historicising/dehistoricising, (2) racializing/deracializing, and (3) embodying/disembodying the source text (149). She further asserts that, from the perspective of reception, audiences engage with adaptations as palimpsests—again, a concept introduced by Gerard Genette—as texts layered with traces of the original, experienced through the memory of prior works that resonate through repetition with variation (*A Theory of Adaptation* 8). The postcolonial critical discourse demonstrates a shift from viewing Shakespeare's cinematic adaptations as a way of *“talking back to empire”* (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin) to viewing these transcultural adaptations as sites of cross-cultural negotiation. The paper will primarily employ this composite theoretical frame for analysing *Joji* as a cinematic adaptation of *Macbeth*.

Joji: A Domestic Macbeth

Dileesh Pothan's *Joji* transposes the tragedy of *Macbeth* from the royal courts of 11th-century Scotland to the 21st-century COVID-19 pandemic-stricken Kerala in

India. The film announces in the very beginning that it is “inspired by *Macbeth*, thus compelling a reading as a transpositional hypertext of its dramatic hypotext (Gennett 5). The film's plot revolves around an affluent, Christian, rubber-estate-owning Panachel family. The Christian identity of the family is expressed by the characters wearing crosses around their necks. The royal *Castle of Dunsinane* finds a parallel in the palatial bungalow of the Panachel family. The *Birnam Woods* surrounding the castle are reflected in the expansive rubber plantation encircling the Panachel residence, thus drawing the spatial and symbolic parallels between the two texts.

The Panachel household is headed by P. K. Kuttapan, an aging yet authoritarian patriarch, who treats the family with a heavy hand and exerts absolute control over it. He is a character in parallel to King Duncan. He has three sons: the eldest, *Jomon*; the middle, *Jaison*; and the youngest, *Joji*. *Jomon* is the character parallel to Malcolm/Banquo/Macduff, and *Jaison* corresponds loosely to Donalbain, while the titular protagonist of the film, *Joji*, is Macbeth. Like Macbeth, he is a “kin and subject” to his father (Shakespeare 1.4.13). Poppy, *Jomon*’s young son, represents Fleance, Banquo’s heir. The only female character in the film, *Jaison*’s wife Bincy, emerges as a counterpart to Lady Macbeth, exerting a quiet but powerful influence on *Joji*. Dr. Felix, a family friend and the doctor who treats Kuttapan, evokes the memory of the Doctor from the play, but actually resonates with the character of the witches/Hecate. Father Kevin does not have a direct parallel in the play, but can be seen as a representation of the divine will. The house help Gireesh represents the characters of Ross/Lennox.

Unlike the play’s opening scene, which features the witches amidst thunder and lightning, *Joji* opens with a seemingly mundane moment—a courier delivery person riding through the vast green rubber plantations, equivalent to the *Birnam Woods* in the play, to the Panachel household to deliver the airgun ordered by Poppy/Fleance. This airgun becomes the central motif, replacing the dagger in the source text. Poppy has ordered it in the name of Kuttapan and tells the delivery person that his grandfather cannot take the delivery as he is in quarantine. This reference, along with Poppy wearing a mask, sets the backdrop of the pandemic and posits the narrative in contemporary reality. Poppy’s lie at the very beginning also hints at the suppressive, dysfunctional household, which will eventually unravel actions that conform to the witches’ refrain, “*Fair is foul, foul is fair*” (Shakespeare 1.1.10). Poppy/Fleance then unpacks the gun and fires two shots at a rubber tree. The name of the director appears as the liquid oozes out of the bark of the rubber tree. These two shots signify the upcoming murders in the film, and although the liquid is white, it evokes the effect of blood and serves as a sinister harbinger of the violence that will unfold. *Joji*/Macbeth, Poppy/Fleance's uncle, takes the gun away from Poppy, commenting that it is no toy for children. There is no literal war in the film, but the very presence of the weapon and the streak of aggression in the characters hint at the silent, emotional war storming within the suppressive household. The scene also establishes the bond between Poppy and his uncle. Poppy has actually stolen the money from Kuttapan’s wallet, but the blame falls on *Joji*, as he too has taken the money out of Kuttapan’s wallet. This act of taking money from Kuttapan’s wallet highlights the lack of financial agency of the family members, especially that of Poppy, *Joji*, and Bincy, who stay at home while all

other members of the house go out for work. While at work near a pond, Kuttappan/King Duncan suffers a severe stroke after pulling a plastic valve from a silt blockage. In the hospital, the doctors declare that he is in extremely critical condition. However, neither of the family members shows much emotional disturbance, a sign of the hidden resentment towards Kuttappan/King Duncan. While having dinner at the kitchen slab, a recurring scene in the film, *Joji/Macbeth* asks whether there is fish, and Bincy/Lady Macbeth asks whether Kuttapan has a will. This is the first hint of Bincy's manipulative and instigative nature, lying beneath her subdued, silent exterior. Later, when Joji/Macbeth seeks permission from Jomon/Malcolm-Banquo to sell the horse he owns, Bincy tells him that he does not need permission, as it is his house too, thus challenging the power dynamics within the family.

P.K. Kuttappan/King Duncan soon returns home in a bedridden condition, and Dr. Felix, a family friend and doctor, a Hecate-like figure, declares that Kuttappan has little time left. Evoking the scene of chamberlains getting drunk, Jomon and Dr. Felix get drunk, and Joji goes to drop Dr. Felix off at his home. After Joji asks, Dr. Felix states that Kuttapan will not survive more than a fortnight, and soon Joji will inherit his father's estate and will be a "*Kotiswaram*, a millionaire. This moment mirrors the witches' prophecy in *Macbeth*, in which they proclaim that Macbeth will hold power as the Thane of Glamis, the Thane of Cawdor, and then as King (*Macbeth* 1.3.48–52). *Joji*, an engineering dropout who is often slighted as a loser by his father and brothers, is tempted by this prospect of inheritance and power.

Jomon/Malcolm-Banquo organizes for everyday prayers for Kuttappan's better health. During the prayers, however, while observing the restlessness of his father, Jomon interrupts the ritual and insists on taking Kuttapan to the hospital, where they perform a brain surgery on Kuttapan. Unlike Malcolm and Donalbain, who never contemplate gaining power by killing King Duncan, Jomon and Jaison wish their father to be dead but are not vile enough to commit patricide. They secretly wish that the surgery fails. However, to their disappointment, the surgery succeeds, Kuttapan regains his consciousness, and returns home. Jaison/Donalbain says he had to use Bincy's fixed deposits for hospital expenses and asks for the money to pay as an advance to book a flat in Chennai. Kuttapan flatly refuses. Jaison/Donalbain reprimands Bincy, saying they will never get a penny until Kuttapan is alive and that she should never ask him again to demand money from his father. Heartbroken, Bincy/Lady Macbeth tells Joji/Macbeth that their plan will never work, and that he will waste his life sitting near the kitchen slab. Bincy's reference to "the plan" reflects a more profound understanding shared by Bincy and Joji. It also reflects the "plan" in their textual parallels, *Macbeth* and *Lady Macbeth*.

Joji brushes Bincy off with a smile, but soon confronts his father. He acknowledges being a disappointment to his father, but if Kuttapan hands over the estate to his sons, it could solve many of their problems, and they would look after him. In response, Kuttapan assaults Joji and tries to choke him. Unlike King Duncan, who believes "*There is no art, to find the mind's construction in the face*" (*Macbeth* 1.4.11–12) but never suspects his sons' betrayal, Kuttapan moves away from the motive of his textual

counterpart, as he is convinced that all his sons want him to be dead to inherit the wealth. This attempt at fair reasoning with his father, on the other hand, reflects Joji's sensitive side, much like Macbeth, whose nature is described by Lady Macbeth as "*too full of th' milk of human kindness*" (*Macbeth* 1.5.17), thus localising Shakespeare's portrayal of moral hesitation and inner conflict in the play.

Slighted thus by the father, Joji/Macbeth retreats to his refuge, the pond in the courtyard, which is parallel to the heath or the Acheron's pit, and cries way to his frustration and sadness. He then hatches a plan to murder his father and visits the chemist's shop in the town to buy medicines. He starts replacing his father's medicines with ones he has bought that are visually identical to the originals. Bincy/Lady Macbeth notices Joji replacing the medicines, but remains silent, being complicit in the act. Soon, as desired, Kuttapan dies. When Joji, who is sitting by the pond, catching fish, hears the screams of Bincy and Gireesh for help, he neatly tidies up his hook and slowly walks down to the house. His composed demeanour and emotional detachment starkly contrast the gravity of the event, echoing Macbeth's cold response after Duncan's murder.

The dagger in the play becomes the replaced medicines in the film, aligning with the realist contemporary narrative genre. At the funeral of Kuttapan/King Duncan, Joji/Macbeth is seen lying listlessly on the bed in his room. Bincy/Lady Macbeth asks him to "wear a mask" and join the funeral. The mask that Joji/Macbeth has to wear is a necessity in the times of pandemic, however, is not just the literal mask but metaphorical too, as stated in the play, "*False face must hide what the false heart doth know*" (*Macbeth*, 1.7.82), and the theme of concealment is reiterated in the line, "*Masking the business from the common eye, for sundry weighty reasons*" (*Macbeth*, 3.1.45-46). Joji/Macbeth thus needs to conceal his guilt and ambition under a composed exterior to be socially acceptable. During the funeral procession, Jomon/Malcolm-Banquo, who has turned into an alcoholic, bursts crackers against telling Dr. Felix, saying that Kuttapan never wished them to be unhappy after his death. During the feast after the funeral service, which is a parallel to the feast organised by Macbeth where Banquo's ghost appears, Jomon berates the priest, Father Kevin, and the priest leaves the feast without eating. This leads to a scuffle between Joji and Jomon. Joji/Macbeth also starts showing the signs of psychological disintegration, like his counterpart, and is restless and suffers from insomnia, and visions of his dead father appear to him.

As he tells Bincy/Lady Macbeth about his dreams, she tells him, "The dead will never return, but beware of the one who lives," hinting that Jomon can be a trouble for them. Soon, Jomon/Malcolm-Banquo tells Joji that there, Joji's batchmate from school, Thotta Sudhi, is spreading rumours that Joji has killed his father. Jomon and Joji decide to confront Thotta Sudhi. As the events unfold, Jomon too tries to choke Joji, trusting Thotta Sudhi's accusation, which leads Joji to fire the shots from an airgun at Jomon's neck and fire two shots, saying, "This is what happens when someone messes with me." He then throws a bomb from a distance to make it look like it is Sudhi who has killed Jomon. At home, he tells family members that he has given the same statement to the Police.

However, the next day he reads the news on the mobile, that the police have recovered two pellets from an airgun from Jomon's neck in his autopsy, which makes him realise that his crime is out. In the drawing room, Poppy/Fleance asks him about the whereabouts of the airgun, and others refuse to believe his stories. Bincy asks him to "stop the charade. Joji/Macbeth confesses his crimes to Jaison/Donalbain and tells him that Bincy/Lady Macbeth knew most of it. He warns him that if they expose him, they all will go down together. Jaison/Donalbain, however, refuses to cower to his threats. Instead of Birnam Wood walking in (Macbeth 5.4), we see a police van approaching from the rubber plantation. Seeing it, Joji locks himself up in the room and searches for "the most delicate part of the skull. He sends a text message - a "*Mojhi Maranam*" (dying declaration)-stating that it is society that has failed him and needs to be arrested. Soon after, the people in the house hear the gunshots. Blood is seen flowing out from under the locked door of Joji's room, in a moment of cyclic visual action where the white latex oozing out of the bark gives way to the blood flowing out from Joji's room. This room has letters pasted on it that read "*Joji's Palace*", referring to the royal theme of the source text. Like Macbeth, Joji aspires to be a "King" and already considers himself one. His act also echoes *Macbeth's* words, "Bloody instructions, which being taught, return / To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice / Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice / To our own lips" (*Macbeth* 1.7.9-12). Thus, emphasising the theme of divine justice.

As the end credits roll, a paralysed Joji is seen lying on a hospital bed. Dr. Felix, Bincy, and the DYSP, looking like the 'weird sisters' (*Macbeth* 1.7.9-12), peering over Joji and asking him to blink his eye if he has committed the crime, to which Joji resolutely refuses to blink his eye. The witches that appear at the very beginning of the play are thus seen in the last scene of the film. This comparative analysis of the plot demonstrates that *Joji* conforms to the criteria put forth by Linda Hutcheon: "a creative and interpretive act of appropriation" and "an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (Hutcheon 8). The film does not linearize the action, but it converges with the play thematically by spatially and temporally relocating it to the 21st century.

To explore the characterisation, *Joji* is not a valiant army general like *Macbeth*, but a black sheep of his family. This engineering dropout dreams of going abroad and making a prosperous future. He wears Western clothes, unlike his brothers, who dress traditionally. He stays at home and is mainly confined to his room, which he locks repeatedly, accentuating his physical and psychological isolation from the rest of the family. He is scrawny, unlike his strong father and brothers, and spends most of the time along with Bincy/Lady Macbeth and Poppy/Fleance. He never engages in agricultural work and does not fit the stereotype of patriarchal masculinity.

Joji does not initially intend to commit murder, just as his Shakespearean counterpart does. However, when his attempts at reasonable negotiation with his father fail, his veiled ambition to seek power and identity in society leads him to murder Kuttapan and later Jomon/Banquo. However, just as guilt and doubt fill Macbeth's mind with 'scorpions' (Shakespeare 3.2.26), Joji too becomes mentally disturbed. He experiences sleepless nights and nightmares. It is not the external war but the inner

psychological war, and his failure to fit the stereotypical patriarchal masculinity, which leads him to attempt suicide. The film also mirrors the source text in its characterisation through the use of alliterative names: Jomon, Jaison, and Joji echo the trio of Malcolm, Macbeth, and Macduff in the play. However, there are no clear parallels in the film. Macbeth, who is a 'kin and subject' to King Duncan (Shakespeare 1.4.24), transforms into a son. Dr. Felix resonates with the role of witches. Gireesh, the house help, reflects the characters of Ross and Lennox.

The most notable transformation occurs in the character of Bincy (Lady Macbeth). Trapped in a repressive household and frustrated in her role as a dutiful daughter-in-law, Bincy manipulates Joji into carrying out her silent ambitions. None of the male members, except Joji, acknowledges her agency. In a reversal at the film's end, Joji is fatally wounded and unlikely to recover, and with Kuttappan and Jomon dead, Jaison's mind is unsteady, and Poppy is a minor. Bincy emerges as the most powerful member of the household. Joji decides to commit suicide when Bincy, his only accomplice and housemate, turns hostile to him. Unlike Lady Macbeth, Bincy does not show any signs of moral disturbance, let alone any psychological denigration. It is her silent ambition that wins in the end, which, in fact, surpasses Joji's. This decisive shift in the gendered agency shows a patriarchal household ultimately coming under the power of the female member of the family. This transmotivation reflects how the film relocates the archetype of an ambitious woman within a patriarchal Indian context.

The film removes the overt supernatural elements, such as the witches, to suit its realist narrative style. However, it subtly evokes their presence through visual metaphors: doctors in hazmat suits resemble the "weird sisters" (Macbeth 1.7.9–12), and the recurring use of eerie vegetation and night-time settings suggests an atmosphere of sinister foreboding. Father Kevin, as a priest, functions as a symbolic representative of divine will. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, doctors—like Dr. Felix—are perceived as holding the power to predict and influence life and death, mirroring the witches' prophetic role. In this way, rather than overt action and melodrama, the film focuses on exploring the psychic arc of its protagonists. The film has sparse dialogue until Kuttapan/Duncan's death; only after his death do the characters begin to express their suppressed emotions. Apart from the pandemic, the household is isolated from the town by the surrounding plantation, heightening focus on the Panachel household, turning it into a simmering domestic tragedy rooted in silence, repression, and unchecked ambition.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the plot, setting, and characterisation of *Joji* shows that it fits the threefold criteria laid down by Hutcheon while defining an adaptation. Along with being an "*acknowledged transposition of a recognisable other work*", that is, "*Macbeth*", *Joji* creatively reinterprets its source text, recontextualising it to the 21st century (Hutcheon 8). The film also demonstrates an extended intertextual engagement with *Macbeth* by reconfiguring its central themes of ambition, guilt, and power within the context of a modern-day patriarchal household. It retains the thematic core of Shakespeare's tragedy while transposing its characters and conflicts to contemporary

times. The film also effectively indigenises the play by conforming to the conditions Hutcheon forwarded. It does so by historicizing the adaptation to a domestic setting in the 21st century, Covid-19 pandemic-stricken in Kerala, while dehistoricizing it by removing its medieval, supernatural, and war elements. The film deracializes characters by removing them from the Scottish frame and replacing them with racially Indian characters. It does, however, culturally proximates them by retaining the element of Christianity in characters. It disembodies the characters from their medieval royal context and places them in a realistic agricultural, patriarchal household in postcolonial Kerala, India.

“Indigenizing can lead to strangely hybrid works.” (Hutcheon,2006,151) The concept of “hybridity” belongs to postcolonial theory, and Joji can be seen as a site of hybridity, where the Shakespearean text is blended with local Indian regional motifs. To quote Hutcheon, “An adaptation... may keep that prior work alive, giving it an afterlife it would never have had otherwise.” (Hutcheon,2006,176). In a passing shot in the film, Poppy is seen watching an episode of the modern-day series “Sherlock” on the BBC, which relocates the canonical hypotext to modern times and can be seen as the director’s statement about doing the same with its canonical hypotext. In the postcolonial times, these cross-cultural adaptations can be seen decolonising Shakespeare from his cultural confines, helping him find global recognition. Shakespeare has not remained so much an imperial icon but a source of multifarious, protean cultural themes of enduring appeal. To conclude, Dileesh Pathan creates a compelling, nuanced palimpsest that etches the timeless human impulses at the heart of *Macbeth* while reinterpreting them through the intimate, often suffocating lens of domestic life.

Author Contributions: All authors have contributed equally to this work. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The data sharing policy does not apply to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Works cited

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*: 2nd ed., Routledge, 2002.

Genette, Gérard. *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Translated by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky, University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. Routledge, 2006.

Joji. Directed by Dileesh Pothan, performances by Fahadh Faasil, Baburaj, Shammi Thilakan, and Unnimaya Prasad, Fahadh Faasil and Friends, 2021.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel." *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, edited by Leon S. Roudiez, translated by Thomas Gora et al., Columbia University Press, 1980, pp. 64–91.

"Dileesh Pothan." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 22 July 2025, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dileesh_Pothan. Accessed 22 July 2025.

Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Edited by Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason, Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury, 2015.

Trivedi, Poonam, and Dennis Bartholomeusz, editors. *India's Shakespeare: Translation, Interpretation, and Performance*. University of Delaware Press, 2005.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Magnus Publishing and/or the editor(s). Magnus Publishing and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions, or products referred to in the content.